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whose hours were numbered. I left the court immediately, and it was some time before the strong emotion excited by this scene had at all subsided. Never had the blighting effects of sin been so vividly brought before me. Grace Kevin had occupied my thoughts long after her condemnation; but knowing her to have been brought up in the Roman Catholic persuasion, contrary to the opinion of some zealous ladies, I refused to bewilder her last hours. While the subject was yet fresh in my mind, I received a visit from Mr. Morton, the Catholic priest. He had been educated in France, and escaped to Ireland on the first revolution of 1793; he was an old man of a truly venerable aspect, and a heart too replete with kind and excellent feelings to be happy as a parish priest in Ireland.

"I am come to you," he said, "on an unusual errand; Grace Kevin, who now lies under sentence of death, lived long enough with Ryan to imbibe a prejudice for his creed. Strange power of novelty over the human mind, which can attach us to doctrines that admit of such practices. Her predilection for the reformed religion has survived every other feeling; she listens to me as though she heard me not; and God forbid that at this awful hour, I should suffer individual or personal feelings to influence me. You see, Mr. Talbot, (he added with a faint smile) I depend upon your believing me."

I do, I said, implicitly; and I spoke with warmth. "You will then, Sir, see this poor girl? Make her neither yours, nor mine, but bring her if you can, a penitent to her God. She has some excellent qualities—she was early led astray. A young and affectionate heart has many enemies to struggle with,—hers deceived her. She is still ignorant of her mother's death, and they purpose to keep her so.—I cannot resign my interest in her; and I was unwilling that she should become the prey of the enthusiasts of your party. Farewell, Sir, she is prepared to see you, and this order will admit you to the prison."

I had a magistrate's order, and was conducted at once to the prisoner. She was alone, sitting on a low stool; her head leaning on her hand, her figure rocking slowly to and fro, in the vain effort to lull the anguish of the mind by the monotonous movement of the body. The cell, compared with the bright day I had left, was partially gloomy; but the slanting rays of the sun were striking on the opposite wall of the court below, and its splendour was faintly reflected through the iron gate, and threw a glow of light around her. She was in the same dress that she wore on the trial, with this only difference that her cap was removed, and her hair hung in large dishevelled ringlets down her shoulders. Their raven blackness was strongly contrasted with the brightly reflected lights that played in the folds of her crimson handkerchief. She started at my entrance, and rose with the bewildered look of one who collects their ideas with pain and difficulty; her eyes were eagerly fixed on the door long after it had closed, and then wandered timidly to me, as if to ask the occasion of my entrance.

"I was informed you wished to see me, Grace," I said gently: "in what way can I serve you?" Her ideas gradually cleared, then clasping her hands, she said,

"Let me see my mother; what have they done with her? Intercede for her I implore you;—she is innocent."

I resolved to communicate her mother's death, but tenderly as it was done, I trembled for the result. The blow which I thought would have destroyed her half paralysed faculties, had a directly contrary effect. This fresh calamity roused her completely; the loss which in a more healthy state of her mind would have overcome it, now only stimulated it to salutary reflection. She wept long and bitterly, and was rational. I saw her daily, and without attempting to offer an excuse for a crime like hers, it was impossible not to feel the deepest compassion for a creature so richly endowed by nature, and so marred by vices not originally her own. Notwithstanding that her education had been in general superior to her station, her ignorance of her religious duties was deplorable; the few prayers she knew were in a language of which she was ignorant; and the rest of her religious knowledge was of a similar description. I attempted not to teach her any

particular form; it was sufficient to awaken her to the general principles of religion, to teach her to feel her own unworthiness, and to lead her to her Saviour as her sole Mediator. She was reprieved for six weeks, to give her time to learn to die. She expressed—I believe felt—no wish to live; but she dreaded the awful eternity—now first contemplated as a reality, upon which she was almost immediately to enter! She was sincerely penitent; and at length better, though humble hopes dawned on her mind. It was impossible to see the workings of this young creature's heart, without the most vehement compassion, and as her last hour drew near, I felt a degree of anguish she did not herself experience. By slow degrees her mind was led at last to feel that all other things were indifferent, compared with the awful change she was about to experience; and to acknowledge that it was fitting she should make every expiation to the offended laws of her country; my eyes were wet with irrepressible tears, but hers were dry; she continued to detain me with delusive eagerness, as if, while I remained, the awful summons was delayed. I endeavoured to direct her attention to the cheering promise of our Saviour, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Say that again, she said; and when I had done so, and pointed it out to her in the Testament she held in her hand, I made a faltering movement to depart.

"You are eager to go," she exclaimed, "cannot you bear with the few dreary moments I have left me!"

Then seeing that it was the excess of my emotion that made me silent, she besought my forgiveness, and prayed in her own wild language that God might bless me entirely; and then, with a generous consideration of what I was suffering, bade me farewell.

The first person I accosted the day after the execution of Grace Kevin, was Mr. Morton; he had staid with her to the last. "Others will tell you," he said, "of her calmness and composure; my conviction is, that terror had completely benumbed her faculties." A discussion followed on the moral difference in crime, in which he displayed a mind acute and intelligent in no common degree; and when we parted, it was with regret I heard that he was about to leave Ireland. He had been educated in France, and was now going to return there. Father Finn, whose place he had supplied, was sufficiently recovered to resume his duties in the village, and the remaining years of Mr. Morton's life he intended to devote to learned leisure and religious seclusion.\*

#### CHANGES ON THE EARTH'S SURFACE.

There are many indications that a powerful current has passed over the continent of America from north to south. These appearances are accounted for, by supposing that a change has, at some period, taken place in the velocity of the earth's motion on her axis. The surface of the earth at the equator revolves at the rate of more than 1090 miles per hour, or about 1500 feet per second, which is about the velocity of a cannon ball. We have no idea of circular motion like this. A wheel of wrought iron of three feet in diameter, will fly in pieces before it reaches a velocity of 400 feet per second. Supposing the earth should be slightly checked in her daily motion, the Pacific Ocean would in a moment rush over the Andes Alleghenies into the Atlantic; the Atlantic would sweep over Europe, Asia, and Africa; and in a few hours the entire surface of the earth would be covered with rushing torrents, except the vicinity of the Poles. The appearances presented on the surface of the earth are precisely such as we would expect after such a catastrophe.

#### ORIGIN OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS.

Bands of architects and workmen of different nations, who had been in the habit of travelling over Europe in search of employment, were incorporated by the Pope towards the close of the twelfth century, and were at the same time endowed with various important privileges, under the name of Free and Accepted Masons. This fraternity was known in Ireland and Britain, and erected the principal churches of both countries.

\* Condensed from the "Literary Souvenir for 1834," decidedly one of the most interesting of the Annuals.